The Dewan then opened the Assembly with the following :—

ADDRESS.

"MEMBERS OF THE SRI MULAM POPULAR ASSEMBLY,

1. It is my pleasing duty, under the gracious command of His Highness the Maha Raja, to extend a cordial welcome to you to the Eighteenth Session of the Assembly, and to lay before you an account of the administration of the State since its last session.

2. Copies of the Administration Report for the year 1096 M. E. have already been placed in your hands. That report contains a fairly full description of the activities of the various departments of the State during the year, and I do not propose to detain you in my address with a recapitulation of its contents. You may remember that the eight months of the tenure of my office that preceded the last session of the Assembly were for me really months of study of the administration here and of formulation of plans for the future as the result of that study. The address that I delivered last year was accordingly confined mainly to a retrospect of conditions as I found them and a statement of the policy that was proposed to be pursued. My chief endeavour in the present address will be to explain the more prominent among the measures that have been either adopted or are in course of adoption in pursuance of that policy.

3. Last year, I classified the administrative activities of the State under four main heads, and I propose to adopt that classification this year also, though not in the same order of arrangement. I shall first refer to what has been done in the matter of developing the resources of the State and promoting the material and moral well-being of the people, then proceed to mention the steps taken for the enhancement of the efficiency of the administration and the improvement of the finances of the State without which that efficiency cannot be secured, and, lastly, say a few words in regard to measures affecting the civic, political and social aspirations of the people as also the removal of inequalities of opportunities for their advancement.

4. Assignment of Land.—At the time of the last Assembly, the rules relating to the registry of puduval lands were under revision, and I invited suggestions from the members of the Assembly in regard to the proposed revision. In response to my invitation, valuable suggestions were offered by some of the members, and after a careful consideration of those as well as other suggestions received from the public, Government issued the revised rules in their final form on the 31st March 1921. The main objects of the revision are, as you know, the prevention of accumulation of land in a few hands and the provision of facilities for the acquisition, by the middle and the poor classes, of small manageable holdings calculated to bring about an amelioration in their economic condition. The rules incidentally provide for the State sharing in the rise in land values which is the natural concomitant of the growth of population and the resources of the country, while minimising the scope for exploitation on the part of non-Travancoreans. Government trust that these rules would pave the way for a steady expansion of occupation and an increasing output of agricultural produce.

5. Land Conservancy.—Closely connected with the assignment of land is the subject of land conservancy. It may perhaps look incredible if I state that there was no provision in the land revenue Regulations of Travancore under which Government could legally impose conditions and restrictions on assignment of land. It is needless to emphasise how important a part salutary conditions and restrictions play in the disposal of lands for *quasi*-public purposes or in favour of certain communities which are too far backward to resist the exploitation of their more advanced neighbours. With a view to remedy this defect, the Government Land Assignment Regulation, III of 1097, has been passed, and power has been taken under that Regulation, as in the case of the British Crown Grants Act, to make, wherever necessary or desirable, assignments of land subject to conditions the breach

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